

*Remarks of Jessica Karjanis  
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**Before the Education Committee  
On S.B. No. 24, AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS  
Sections 28 and 29, Teacher Education Requirements and Teacher Tenure Evaluations**

**February 21, 2012**

Good afternoon Senator Stillman and Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee.

My name is Jessica Karjanis, and I'm a middle school language arts teacher in Stamford. I would like to submit my written comments about Sections 28 and 29 for your review.

**About Section 28:** Malloy claims that he wants to raise the bar for educators, but by removing the post-graduate study requirements he is lowering standards and paving the way for a decrease in our salaries. How does he expect to attract the best and the brightest like that? While Connecticut teachers may seem well-paid in comparison to teachers in other states, we're ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> on the National Education Association's Salary Comfort Index, which compares pay to cost of living. (We got beat by the entire Deep South!) Idealism doesn't pay the rent – especially not in Malloy's home city of Stamford, where a one-bedroom apartment would cost a teacher half of his or her paycheck. Don't lower standards now, and don't lower paychecks later!

**About Section 29:** Imagine this "hypothetical" situation. Two weeks before CMTs three children emigrate from Haiti, speak no English, and are plopped into your classroom. There is a program for new immigrants at another school in your district, but for some mysterious reason the school is unable to take these students until after the CMTs are over. Therefore, the students will be taking the CMTs at your school, even though they barely know enough English to ask for a bathroom pass.

Wait, that wasn't hypothetical. That happened in my school, in 2010. When the CMT results came back, we had missed our reading proficiency target by less than one percentage point. Do you think it's possible that our passing score was brought down by three students who bombed the entire test because they couldn't read the instructions? I'd bet my paycheck on it. (Or at least the half that's left over after I pay my rent!) But if Malloy's bill goes through, something like that could contribute to me losing my job. It would be my fault that three Creole-speaking students failed a test written in English.

I urge you to vote against Bill 24. It won't help our teachers, and it won't help students. Thank you for reading my statement and I thank you in advance for your support.